

A True
RELATION
OF THE
PERSECUTIONS

Of the people of God called

QUAKERS,

In the Town of *Aroundel* in the County of *Sussex*, and
concerning the breaking up their meeting, and
committing them to prison, and laying in
Fetters of Iron.

With an account of the Reasons of *Nicholas Rick-
mans*, and *Edward Hampers* going to the Steeple-
house at *Aroundel* upon their Fast day.

And also an Answer to a Letter, sent up by the Perse-
cutors to a Member of this present

PARLIAMENT,

Who in it have a pretence to cover all the said Persecutions,
directed to their Representative, to the Parliament, for
them to give sentence.

Now here is their actions as follows, for them and all
that fear God to give sentence.

An account in brief of the several wicked proceedings of se-
veral that have been in Authority in the Town of *Aroun-
del* for these four years last past, whereby the envy
of them against the Innocent may appear,
and is as followeth.

(1)

A True Relation of the persecution of the people of God, called Quakers in the Town of Aroundel in the County of Suffex, &c.

An account in brief of the several wicked proceedings of several that have been in authority in the Town of Aroundel for these four years last past, &c.

IN the year 1655. *Tho. Ballard* being Maior, at the very beginning thereof, did cause the Constable *George Penfold*, accompanied with one *John Beaton* Priest and others, to come into the house of *Ni. Rickman*, where was then a meeting of the people of God, called Quakers; and there and then violently, to the disturbance and quite breaking up our peaceable meeting, did hale a servant of the Lord, by name *Tho. Laucock* forth of the meeting in great fury (when he was speaking to the people there met) before the said Maior, where after he had asked him several questions, he sent him to the Common Goale, where from Sessions to Sessions he was continued a whole year, although first nor last was any as matter of breach of law made appear against him, and yet are we called troublesome spirits.

In the said year by the said Maior, and others with him, was the Constables *George Penfold* and *John Serle*, sent unto the house of the said *Nich. Rickman*, in a filthy manner, to search, as they pretended, for vagabonds, idle, wandering persons, whose malice was at the servants of God, if not they would have sought Inns and Ale-houses, and not such as meet together in the fear of God; there being then an order for the taking such idle persons up for the voyage to *Jamaica*, and they being answered that there was none such in the said house, nor any such person was used to have entertainment there; they regarded not the answer, having a design upon the servant of the Lord, whose name is *Joseph Face*, who was then there, and that they knew; so entred the house, and as soon as they came in, laid hold on him, and had him immediately to the *George* in *Aroundel* before the said Maior and others, where notwithstanding an account was given by him, to any needful question, as to his place of abode, and relations, and imployment he then was about, and a certificate produced of his then late service as an Officer under the Command of *Colonel Biscoe* in the Army, whereby to give any just satisfaction to them, yea and although his place of birth was within few miles of the Town, yet without any regard at all, the said Maior judging in plain words he was not a person fit to live in the Commonwealth, as he said, but a vagabond, and so fit to be sent away, which accordingly was, together with a most vile company then by that order gathered together, executed as such a person, and sent to *Portsmouth* to be shipped to *Jamaica*, not suffering him to have on whit of either victuals or drink for a long time together to refresh himself with, because he refused to receive meat or drink of the Constables among that rude people, whom they allowed the same to, while they were under their custody: this was the dealing of *Thomas Ballard* in his year, the which being at an end.

One *Tho. Somton* began, who soon after the Sessions held at *Aroundel* at the be-

beginning of his year, so following, where the foresaid *Tho. Laucock* in the private Chamber after the Sessions was ended, was freed; the said *Tho. Sewton* took occasion to send for *Nich. Rickman* and *Francis* his wife, and hearing that *Tho. Laucock* was at their house, sent his warrant by the Constables *Henry Omden* and *John Taldin*, and fetcht him up also, where after some questions asked of him the said *Nicholas*, concerning the writing of a copy of a paper, which was concerning the true worship of God, and worshippers according to the Scriptures, and a Testimony against the false, which was owned by him to be writ; he said then he would send him to prison with his wife, to whom he called for sureties, or else she must away to the Goal, for which he would give no reason at all for so requiring, till at length pretended she had disturbed her own brother *Henry Staples*, Priest of South and North *Stoakes*, as he said, which Priest afterward said, he had accused her to him for blasphemy, in saying in answer to a foolish question of his, that the word of God was before the Scriptures was written; for these pretences, without any one appearing to accuse them, he immediately wrot both their *Mittimus*es, and without any liberty, scarce to eat a little victuals, or settle any business in their trade and family, by reason whereof it being so maliciously and suddenly carried on, all they had was exposed to loss, and they to be utterly undone, had not the Lord prevented their malice, where in the common Goale they lay almost all the cold Winter season, till the next Sessions, when as they, by the Law of the Nation should have been, as real offenders were, brought forth to tryal, and the woman being great with child, and now nigh being delivered in the prison, yet such was their cruelty, who was then in Authority, as that they did not judge it fit, as some of them was heard to say, to have them brought forth to tryal; but to the next Sessions they were continued, and the truth is, had not the thing been laid before the Protector and his Council, it might nor have been time for tryal then neither, but when the two Sessions came, after almost half a years imprisonment, and they were called forth in open Court, and proclamation made for them to come in that had ought to accuse *Nich. Rickman* or his wife with, not one had any thing to accuse him with, and so were acquitted.

And yet notwithstanding they were so cleared, as soon as they were at home about their business; again comes a paper under the said Mayor, and *Will. Freeman* and *Rich. Knowles* hands, men to do justice, wherein they calls him and his wife malefactors, and authorized the Constables to take and level upon the goods of the said *Nicholas*, whom they said was of estate, money for their wicked carrying them to prison, when there was no just cause given by them so for them to do; and accordingly twenty four shillings worth of goods they took upon the same account.

Now *Thomas Laucock* then at the same time, in the next place the Maior turned to, and asked him of his place of abroad; the which he told him was at that present a place called *Sedgwick Lodge*, but he told him he was a wondering Rogue, and he would have his back soundly flashed, and accordingly then also made another warrant to the keeper of the house of Correction, baring date the tenth of Nov. 56. to which place he was immediately disposed of, wherewith much fury and cruelty, the professing correction-man *Henry Edwards* did persecute him, tearing off his cloaths off his back, and whipping him, & claped him in Irons, & in a low cold

room he kept him without meat or drink for divers dayes together, or bed, or fire, or candle for seven or eight weeks together, not permitting his friends to come to visit him; if any did through earnest intreaty get in, he would sometimes not let them forth for a whole day or a night together; and yet these cruel men call us troublesome spirits. In this condition in mighty cold frosty Winter weather, with nothing but a little straw he was kept, not affording him light, or the benefit of air for divers dayes together; so Sessions again being come, he was again called forth, and nothing being laid to his charge, they set him free after all this suffering.

In the next year 58. *George Taylor* coming to be Mayor, did for no other cause or pretence whatsoever, but onely for going forth of the Town to a meeting upon the first day, where the people of God, called Quakers, were met together, caused the Ward to be serpartly for the same purpose as he was heard to confesse and say, he had particular order to stay the Quakers given him, and to have them before the Mayor, who accordingly did command them to the Mayor, viz. *Trestrum Martain, John Ludgater, Nicho. Rickman, Edward Hamper, Will. Turner, Rich. Cook, John Sewer* and other friends, and they being brought before him, he asked the reason of our going forth on that day, the occasion being truely declared to him of their going, which was as aforesaid; he answered we might go if we would, but if we did, he would prosecute us for so doing, the which according to his and the rest with him, who live in envy and wicked purposes, he calling them before him by his warrant, objected breach of Sabbath against them, and afterward he had so called them before him several times about it, and the lawfulness of the occasion on that day they went upon, was argued, he said Mayor was forced in plain word to confesse before *Will. Pellat*, another wicked envious man who was the Constable, that he did believe we, who he then was endeavoring to render guilty of breach of law in that particular, were men so honest as that we would not do no evil upon that day nor any other. So here all may see his blindness being in envy, that we being worthy of punishment whom he judged would do no evil, did suffer by him for well doing; for between he and the rest of his brethren, together with the conjunction of the Priest *John Goldwire* of the Town, upon one of their feast dayes when they were met, did send the aforesaid *Will. Pellat* and *Nethany Older* Constables, with a warrant under *George Taylors* hand, and took of the goods of *Edward Hamper*, worth seventeen shillings, from *Will. Turner* the worth of eighteen shillings, from *Rich. Cook* value about twenty shillings, of *Trest. Martain* to the like value, of *N.R.* the worth of sixteen shillings, and the rest with them comprehended in the warrant, were to be laid in the Stocks certain hours, but were not executed; & this was for no other cause truely, as before but for well-doing, he confessing he did believe we were men would do no evil willingly on any day; this said Mayor was so wicked, either of himself, or being put on by others to his own hurt and ruin, that he caused eight persons of the Baptists to be indicted at Quarter Sessions for the same occasion, of going to one of their meetings on the first day likewise, where six of them were committed to Goal for it, and some of them being poor in the out-word, and having a great charge, was put to great extremity by it.

These be the wicked men that now tell the Parliament in a paper of theirs
of

of Complaint, that they are in such a sad condition they know not what to do, and are at a stand, the which they may well be, fearing such wickedness as this may not be tollerated alwayes, as formerly it hath been,

Witness to the truth of these particulars our own hands who were real Friends, and imployed in their service, to this present Parliament that now again is in being, in the time of their greatest extremity,

Nich Rickman

William Turner

Edw. Hamper

Trestrum Martain

John Ludgater

and John Beal.

Here followeth a true Account, as in the sight of God, of the Ground and Cause of Nich. Rickman and Edw. Hampers, going into the Steeple-house of Aroundel, upon the 29 day of the 5th month, 1659. being upon their fast day; And also of the particulars that there happened at the same time in truth and plainness, for a true Information to all, contrary to a grievous, and for the most part false complaint, drawn up and signed by John Pellet of Aroundel, and divers others; and sent to Coll. Downs a Member of this present Parliament; and is as followeth:

A Bout the four or five and twentieth day of the month aforesaid, the Town of Aroundel was summoned to appear at the Court house in the Town, when met, a Petition was drawn forth and read, wherein Tithes was to be petitioned for, as an antient legal maintenance, as they pretended for a Gospel Ministry; concerning which a question arose about the right and legallity of it from Scripture, the which *John Goldwire* Priest then, present set himself to justifie, and did affirm it to be a Gospel maintenance the which seeming to be quite contrary to the Scriptures of truth, and he and the rest of the Promoters refusing to stay to make the same appear at that time: & hearing that the next week there was a fast published to be in most of the chief Towns of the County, and hearing from one *John Duke* a Country man, who told *Edw. Hamper* that some of their parish was spoken to by the Priest to be at Aroundel at the fast, because the Priest said, he thought there would be something for them to set their hands to, upon this account as in the presence of God we declare, were we moved to be at the same time at the Steeple-house, not thinking to speak in the least a word, but to tarry, as we thought, till all their worship had been at an end, and then to desire for the true satisfaction of all concerning Tithes, that it might be made appear to be according to Scripture, having the contents thereof drawn up in a paper in brief,

brief, to be read when they had done among them all, a Cobby whereof was afterward accordingly delivered to the Priests, but they would not read it, nor answer it; a Cobby whereof is herewith printed, and is as followeth:

Forasmuch as there is a great scruple among many people in this County of *Suffex* and elsewhere in this Nation concerning Tithes, which is and hath been a great oppression that this Land hath long groaned under, and many hath been compelled both by Priest and Rulers, contrary to the witness of God in their Consciences, either to pay Tithes to the Priest and Impropiator, or to run the hazard of a grievous spoil of their goods, which the people called Quakers in the Nation, who witness Christ come, and the Gospel preached, and so for Conscience sake cannot uphold that which he put an end unto, nor cannot pay Tithes, which was onely done to Priests & Levites under the Law, & never commanded nor paid to the Ministers of the Gospel as their maintenance; And therefore have endured patiently this several years the cruelty of the ravening wolves in the spoiling of their goods, which the Lord hath taken notice of. Therefore we who are called Quakers, do desire & require you, who either doth or hereafter ever shall either pay or receive Tithes of any that before any person or persons any farther put their hands to the upholding of that crying oppression, you who are called Ministers of the Gospel in this County or elsewhere, we who are called Quakers do desire you to prove it by plain Scripture proof, that it is due to the Ministers of the Gospel by the Law of God, or else let all people take heed what they do, or take heed how they proceed any further to uphold this grievous oppression which God will overthrow, and that suddenly.

From them who are in scorn called Quakers.

But we two aforementioned coming into the place, and standing there peaceably, one *Henry Jurdain* Priest, being in that which they call his prayer, and hearing him to be without true understanding in what he uttered in his confessing his own and peoples wickedness, and then praying notwithstanding as his wonted manner in his ignorant formal prayers is to do, to be Convinced and Converted, and that God would destroy the wicked, and confound the false prophets, and cast them into the lake; as before this he hath been truly charged so to do: forgetting his own, accusing himself and people for the same, whereby he truly prayed for his own destruction and the peoples, and now confessing his wickedness, and praying to be Convinced and Converted; *Edw. Hamper* was moved to speak a few words to him to this purpose, *If it be so that thou art unconvinced and unconverted, What makest thee there in that place?* This being the whole sum of the matter, so passed by him; for the which he is charged for quarreling, & requiring as they say, an account of the service performed to God by the Minister, to which the Priest did not say one word, but immediately as soon as the words was spoken and ended, in an exceeding violent manner did they tear and hale the said *Edward* out of the Steeple-house, and in stead of a word for satisfaction, the Priest immediately turns his speech, and pretends to pray very earnestly against a people, as he said, that were an implacable, incorrigible wicked people, and a people as he would seem to tell God that had formerly known God, as he said of us, they had, but named not Quakers, but now we were wicked enemies to God and his people, although he had for-

got how lately before he had confest his own wickedness and peccles; so full of confusion the man was, and a great many great and grievous large expressions he uttered more, too tedious to be here related in this place concerning them; all which I the said N. R. with much peace in my self, and patience bore the hearing of the deceit, waiting with a pressed spirit for the truths sake till he had ended concerning them he spake, and there being a little respite of time in his speaking before he began again, I stood up and spoke, with as much soberness as was possible, these few words:

Friend, I desire that thou wouldest cease over much speaking, and in the fear of God, and the plain demonstration of truth, declare to the people plainly whom thou meanest by thy speaking, and prove what evil the people are guilty of, before them all; this is as I remember the very words; & all was spoken, to which the Priest answered not a word neither, but my words being soon spoken, he went on again; and there was an end; and I thought he would do somewhat when he had done, but old *John Pellat* of *Arundel*, a man well known to many, in a great rage came running upon me, and would not that I should stay any longer there, and *George Tailor* and divers following him, they haled me out and took me and the other aforementioned, and carried me by head and shoulders into the house of Correction, and there *Tho. Colbrook* the Mayor kept us during his pleasure.

What we had just Cause to speak, and likewise what was in writing delivered to them, after they came forth from the Steeple-house, although they came by the prison window where we were put by the way side.

Neither in the place of worship, nor out of it would they afford us one word of answer; And this is the true ground and cause of *John Pellat* and the rest with him of complaint to the Parliament, in which there is many lyes and falsehoods.

As for instance, first, you say, that you who are a peaceable people desiring nothing more; whose fruits quite declare contrary by your persecuting. Secondly you say, you desire to enjoy the Gospel of peace.

Which yours is quit contrary to the order and rule of the Gospel, but according to the Papists, Jewes, which ravens for Tithes, and that was the intent of your fast for Tithes, who struck with the fist of wickedness, as that day your fruits declared it; And so your unquietness and uncivilness did appear, and not like men that would enjoy the Gospel of God in peace. Thirdly, For quarrelling and railing, as you say; it's false altogether, and in this you do not speak as men fearing God, for that was not our practice in your old Mass-house, which you call your place of publick worship, as you say. And fourthly, Whereas you say, the parties could by no means be intreated to desist, that's false; as for *Edw. Hamper*, who spoke a few words, first to the Priest, when the Priest did desire to be convinced, and converted and his people, he the said *Edward* asking then the Priest what he did there if he be not convinced nor converted, and bid him answer it in the fear of God, and for this haled him out, and carried him to prison, without intreating in the Steeple house, and when the said *Nich. Rickman* was moved to speak a few words peaceably, they being spoken, I stood quietly and had done, and made no disturbance, but violently I was abused, and never intreated at all to desist, but haled away violently to prison, and so that in-

mation is utterly false; and whereas you say, it was our usual manner formerly so to do, to come and to quarrel, rail and disturb, until by Law restrained; to quarrel, rail and disturb, is likewise false, or to pervert the Souls of the simple, but that hath been the Priests work for their bellies; but when we were moved of the Lord to speak his Word, we did although we were imprisoned, contrary to Law, as you did at your late fast, and hath been your usual manner, & by no time do we take occasion to do evil who be in the hand in which times and seasons are, and so we are not like *Jannes* and *Jambres*, who withstood *Moses*, for we have not *Pharaoh* on our part, but you are more like *Jannes* and *Jambres*, who flie to the Magistrates, and the Jewes which thrust *Paul* out of the Temple, and then cryed, help men of Israel; And so did you, when you had thrust us out of your Temple into the prison, after you cry, help Parliament, help Magistrates, help people, take them away; Where is the Spirit in you that are called Ministers of Christ, that should stop the mouths of the gainsayers? Surely the spirit of the dumb Ass should reprove the madness of the false prophets; and whereas you challenge protection of the Parliament, as ye yield obedience to them, or expect liberty and protection in things concerning the worship of God, according to his Word, the liberty of whose service, you say, you esteem dearer then any liberty and priviledge that can be named. Answer, Your worship and service is quite contrary to the Word Christ Jesus, who persecutes and hales out of your Synagogues, *John 16.* and if the Parliament should take away Tithes and Stipends and Easter reckonings, then it would be manifest your service was for your bellies, and not for the worship according to the Word, as a great deal of your fruits make appear to the Nation; and you say, you are at a loss, and your Justices knows not what to do, and you desire your representative to present your sad condition to the Parliament; Are you not ashamed? cannot you stop the mouths of gainsayers? are you at a loss? have you no spiritual weapons? will you manifest your selves to be the evil beasts, that will war with flesh and blood; evil beasts alwayes wars and fights with flesh and blood, worse then a good Beast, whom you humbly, as you say, beg to consider the matter, consult and give sentence; this is like to the Priests Judgement to have the Parliament make Laws and give Judgement both; and this they humbly beg, and for this you crouch, as all the persecutors upon the earth did, for Law, Judgment and Sentence upon the Innocent, which was never the work of the true Ministers of Christ, or true Christians, shew example if you can, from Christ or his Apostles, from the Scriptures which you pretend to be your rule, which we do believe that many in the Parliament will come to see that such are not fit to be called Ministers, that are not able to stop the mouths of a gainsayer; who are called Orthodox and Learned men, & yet is not able to satisfie and answer such as you call Lay men and plain Countrey men a Question, and yet you of the Parliament look for maintenance, Surely, many of the Parliament will see such, that after they have sent them out into the Vineyard and given them maintenance, they are not able to stop the mouth of gainsayers, as they suppose, but send them to prison, and beg of them for sentence, and cumber them.

And thus you are troubled who have not the spiritual weapons.

THE END.